

**CENTRAL PUGET SOUND FREEWAY HOV LANE HOURS
OF OPERATION EVALUATION**

BRIEFING PAPER

Prepared for the
December 2002 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

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PURPOSE:

Update the Commission on the Central Puget Sound Freeway HOV Lane Hours of Operations Evaluation.

ACTION/OUTCOME:

Provide the Commission with revised cost estimates that have been developed for implementing a pilot project that includes opening several HOV lanes on the Eastside to all traffic at night. Staff will also brief Commissioners on the public and partner outreach since last month's decision to enter a public comment period on this proposal to test a change to Puget Sound region HOV lane hours of operation policy.

BACKGROUND:

In February 2002, the Secretary and the Commissioners received a letter from the House Transportation Committee asking them to explore our policies on hours of operation for HOV lanes on central Puget Sound region freeways.

At its March meeting the Commission endorsed the department work plan for conducting the evaluation.

In May the department reported to the Commission on data collection and analysis activities, including the communication tools designed to assist the public with understanding the evaluation process and provide input on the study.

Throughout the summer the department continued to report at Commission meetings as additional work was completed and as chapters were added to the HOV Evaluation Notebook and on-line project website. Change options were discussed at the June Commission meeting and a draft change options evaluation tool was presented at the August meeting. The final two Notebook chapters on Environmental Implications and

Safety and Operating Considerations were presented and discussed at the September Commission meeting.

During the October meeting the department reviewed with Commissioners all the data and analysis conducted during the study. Staff shared partner feedback received to date on the study and change options being considered. Staff reviewed with Commissioners the study schedule and future steps to encourage public comment on the evaluation.

At the November meeting staff shared with Commissioners evaluation conclusions and recommended implementing a pilot project in which freeway HOV lanes would be opened at night to all traffic on I-405, SR 167, and portions of I-90 and SR 520.

DISCUSSION:

At the December meeting, staff is expected to present to Commissioners revised pilot project cost estimates. Staff will also share details of public and partner outreach efforts since the Commission's November decision to seek public comments on the department's proposal.

RECOMMENDATION:

None required at this time.

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